

# Now the Long Trick Over: A Comprehensive Analysis of Shakespeare's Sonnet 130



**Now the long trick's over** by Arthur Mathison

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported

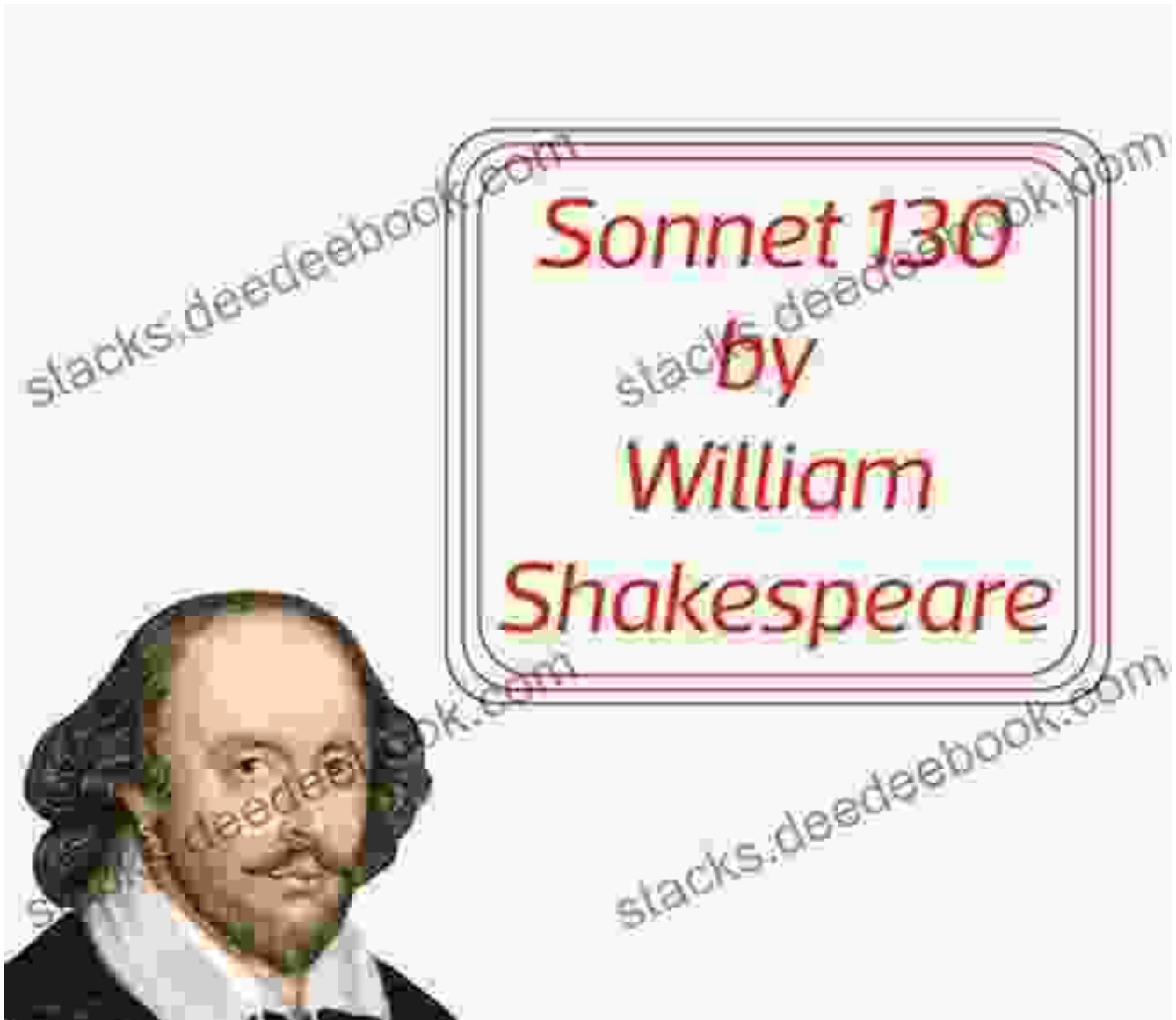
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Sonnet 130 is one of William Shakespeare's most famous and enigmatic sonnets. It is a departure from the traditional love sonnets of the Elizabethan era, in which the poet typically praises the beauty and virtues of his beloved. Instead, Sonnet 130 is a brutally honest appraisal of the poet's mistress, who is described as being far from beautiful by conventional standards.

The poem begins with the speaker declaring that his mistress is not fair, nor is she young. He goes on to say that her breasts are "dun," her breath is

"rank," and her eyes are "black." He concludes by saying that he loves her "as I love my own flesh."

This sonnet has been the subject of much debate and interpretation over the centuries. Some scholars believe that the speaker is actually describing his mistress's inner beauty, while others believe that he is being deliberately cruel. Still others believe that the poem is a satire on the conventions of love poetry.

Whatever the speaker's true intentions, Sonnet 130 is a powerful and moving poem that explores the complex nature of love. It is a reminder that love is not always about physical beauty or perfection, but about something deeper and more enduring.

### **Structure and Meter**

Sonnet 130 is written in the traditional Shakespearean sonnet form, which consists of 14 lines in iambic pentameter. The poem is divided into three quatrains and a final couplet. The quatrains are each followed by a period, and the couplet is followed by a full stop.

The rhyme scheme of the poem is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG. This rhyme scheme is common in sonnets, and it helps to create a sense of unity and cohesion.

### **Imagery**

Shakespeare uses a variety of imagery in Sonnet 130 to create a vivid and memorable portrait of his mistress. He compares her breasts to "dun," or brownish-gray, earth, and her breath to "rank," or foul-smelling, garbage.

He also describes her eyes as "black," which could be interpreted as a reference to her dark hair or to her perceived ugliness.

These images are all negative and unflattering, but they serve to emphasize the speaker's honesty and sincerity. He is not trying to idealize his mistress or to sugarcoat her flaws. He is simply presenting her as she is, without any artifice or embellishment.

## Themes

Sonnet 130 explores a number of complex and challenging themes, including:

- **The nature of love:** The poem challenges the traditional view of love as being based on physical beauty and perfection. The speaker argues that love is more than skin deep, and that it can exist even between two people who are not considered to be conventionally attractive.
- **The power of honesty:** The speaker's brutal honesty about his mistress's appearance is refreshing and disarming. It suggests that true love is based on acceptance and understanding, rather than on superficial qualities.
- **The importance of individuality:** The speaker's mistress is not a typical beauty, but she is loved by the speaker for her unique qualities. This suggests that everyone is worthy of love, regardless of their appearance or other superficial characteristics.

Sonnet 130 is a complex and challenging poem that has been the subject of much debate and interpretation over the centuries. It is a powerful and

moving exploration of the nature of love, the power of honesty, and the importance of individuality.

Whether you love it or hate it, Sonnet 130 is a poem that will stay with you long after you have finished reading it. It is a reminder that love is not always about physical beauty or perfection, but about something deeper and more enduring.



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